



Meeting with Small Business and Manufacturing Advisory Groups - Fuel Impacts - 21 April 2026

To:	Hon Cameron Brewer – Minister for Small Business and Manufacturing		
Attendees:	In-person attendees: David Downs, Chair, Small Business Advisory Group (SBAG) Online attendees: Rob McKenzie-Carroll, Member, Manufacturing Productivity Advisory Group (MPAG) Catherine Lye, CEO, Advancing Manufacturing Aotearoa (AMA)		
Date:	21 April, 2026	Time:	7.15-7.45pm
Location:	Rainbow Room, Parliament Privacy of natural persons [Redacted] [Redacted]	Tracking:	BRIEFING-REQ-0031572

Agenda

Items for discussion
This follow-up meeting supports your engagement on fuel-crisis impacts for small businesses and manufacturers. You may wish to: • Thank MPAG and SBAG for their continued engagement and intelligence sharing. • Emphasise the Government's fuel response work is ongoing, and continues to be informed by feedback from business and industry. • Note that the Government preference remains to avoid escalation to response Phases 3 and 4, while maintaining readiness should conditions require further action. Questions you could ask: • Since our last meeting, how have conditions changed for businesses in your sectors? • If disruption persists beyond the next 4-6 weeks, what would you expect to change materially for small businesses and manufacturers? • What information would be most helpful for businesses right now? • What specific triggers would lead industry to expect a change in the Government response?

Background

1. SBAG and MPAG are Government advisory groups representing small businesses and the manufacturing sector. You had a Teams meeting with SBAG and MPAG Chairs and associated members on 15 April to discuss fuel-crisis impacts on businesses [Briefing 0030833 refers].

2. You have committed to holding weekly Teams meetings with David and Sarah, or delegated representatives for the next few weeks.
3. MBIE officials regularly meet with SBAG and MPAG Chairs and selected members to gather industry intelligence on fuel-crisis impacts, relaying relevant information to the MBIE's fuel response team. Officials have also used these meetings to share Government updates through the Chairs, supporting agile and coordinated information flow between Government and industry.

Key messages provided to SBAG/MPAG Chairs

4. Following your last meeting with David, Sarah and selected SBAG/MPAG members, officials advised in a follow-up response that:
 - Fuel response work is ongoing, incorporating feedback from business and industry.
 - The Government preference remains to avoid escalation to response Phases 3 and 4, but planning continues should this be required.
 - New Zealand's fuel supply remains stable, with petrol, diesel and jet fuel stocks within normal ranges; MBIE is in daily contact with fuel importers and monitoring stock levels and shipping movements.
 - The Commerce Commission continues to monitor retail prices and importer margins.
5. Officials also noted interest from businesses in short-term relief for cashflow pressures caused by the Middle East conflict. We advised no decisions been taken on financial support measures at this stage.

Industry feedback on fuel-crisis impact

6. AMA recently surveyed 48 manufacturers to assess fuel-related impacts. Feedback indicates that the average impact on businesses remain manageable, with a current impact rating of 2-3 out of 10 (10 being extremely impact). Some sub-sectors, such as plastics, are more impacted with a rating on 7+ out of 10.
7. Two-thirds of surveyed firms are now experiencing some impact, primarily through:
 - diesel price increases (commonly ~15–18% above budget)
 - freight and logistics cost increases
 - shipping delays and surcharges, and
 - export disruption in specific markets.
8. Expected impacts from a prolonged disruption have increased, reflecting concern about duration and second-order effects. Manufacturers also report early behavioural changes, including increased caution or deferral with recruitment decisions, capital expenditure and research and development activities. These emerging trends could affect productivity and growth if disruption persists beyond 4-6 weeks.
9. Industry feedback continues to prioritise fuel supply visibility and logistics continuity. Only a small proportion of survey respondents explicitly raised intervention mechanisms (eg RUC relief) to support manufacturers.

Biographies

David Downs, Chair, Small Business Advisory Group (SBAG)	
	David is a business leader, public servant, consultant, board director and public speaker. He is chair of SBAG and CEO of The New Zealand Story, a government-funded initiative which markets New Zealand to the world. David was recently appointed CE of Education New Zealand, starting 2 June 2026. A cancer survivor and author, David is a strong advocate for innovation, small business, and public health.
Rob McKenzie-Carroll, Chief Operating Officer, HamiltonJet	
	Rob joined HamiltonJet in 2016 as Health & Safety Compliance Manager. He was appointed Chief Operating Officer in February 2025. Prior to this, he worked in management roles at manufacturers across Europe. He is part of the Canterbury Regional Group for Advancing Manufacturing Aotearoa (AMA). You recently met Rob when you visited HamiltonJet in Christchurch on 14 April.
Catherine Lye, CEO, Advancing Manufacturing Aotearoa (AMA)	
	Catherine joined AMA as its first CEO in October 2023. One of AMA's roles is to provide secretariat support to MPAG. Prior to joining AMA, Catherine was the Employers and Manufacturers Association's Head of Advanced Manufacturing & Export Communities from 2021. Catherine earlier worked for ExportNZ for 12 years where she held senior roles. You are scheduled to meet Catherine and her Chairperson, Sarah Ramsay, on Thursday 23 April.